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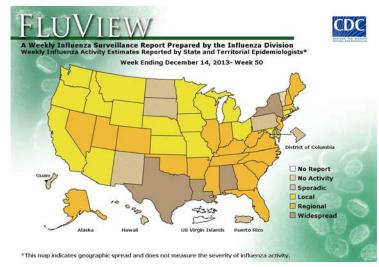
Influenza activity continues to increase in the US, with the largest increases seen in southern states. It's not too late to get vaccinated! For vaccine locations, visit www.ochealthinfo.com/flu.

Influenza vaccination resulted in approximately 79,000 (17%) fewer hospitalizations during the 2012-13 influenza season, than otherwise might have occurred (without vaccination). Based on CDC estimates, vaccination prevented approximately 6.6 million influenza illnesses and 3.2 million medically attended illnesses. During the 2012-13 influenza season, fewer than half of persons  $\geq$  6 months of age were vaccinated against influenza. Higher rates of vaccination would have prevented a substantial number of additional cases and hospitalizations. For more information, see <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr">www.cdc.gov/mmwr</a>, 12/13/2013 issue of *MMWR*.

- Flu vaccination may reduce adverse cardiovascular outcomes in patients at high risk: Results of a meta-analysis of randomized clinical trials showed lower risk of adverse cardiovascular events in patients who received influenza vaccine compared to those who received placebo. See *JAMA 2013 Oct 23*: <a href="http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1758749">http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1758749</a>.
- Three major infectious disease societies endorse mandatory immunizations for health workers: The Infectious Disease Society of America (IDSA), the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA), and the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society (PIDS) issued a joint statement that all healthcare personnel (HCP) should be required to receive all six vaccines that are recommenced for them by the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices when voluntary programs fail to achieve 90% immunization. The recommended vaccines for HCP are: influenza; hepatitis B; measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR); varicella; tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis (Tdap); and meningoccoccal disease. The statement can be found on the IDSA website: <a href="http://www.idsociety.org">http://www.idsociety.org</a>.
- Influenza-associated deaths occur annually in children, even in those without high-risk conditions. Most of the children who died during the study period 2004-2012 had not received a flu vaccination, and antiviral treatment was reported in less than half of the children who died in 2010-11 and 2011-12. CDC recommends that all children ≥6 months of age be vaccinated against influenza annually and children with influenza-like illness who are hospitalized, who have severe illness, or who are at risk of complications (less than 2 years of age or those with underlying medical conditions) receive treatment with flu antiviral drugs as soon as possible. The study was published in *Pediatrics 2013 Oct 28*: <a href="http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2013/10/23/peds.2013-1493.abstract">http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2013/10/23/peds.2013-1493.abstract</a>

## Seasonal Influenza Update- Week 50 (ending Dec. 14)

- In the **US**, 18% of respiratory specimens tested were positive for influenza. The proportion of outpatient visits for influenzalike illness (ILI) was 2.3%, above the national baseline of 2.0%. Geographic spread of influenza was widespread in 4 states and regional in 20 states.
- In **California**, influenza activity was upgraded to local during Week 50.
- In **Orange County**, visits for ILI were at 2.4% during Week 50. So far this season 4 severe flu cases (ICU) have been reported.







Warm wishes for a happy holiday from the staff at Epidemiology!